GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3821
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2015
Review of Food Policy
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the eminent agriculturists have urged the Government to review the country"s food policy especially the distribution system to achieve "Zero Hunger" across the country, if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto; and
(b) whether people living in rural areas have to depend on the Public Distribution System due to the drought situation prevailing in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)
(a) & (b): with an objective to provide food and nutritional security to the people of the country at affordable prices, Government has enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA) w.e.f 05.07.2013 which provides coverage of upto 75% in rural areas and 50% in urban areas, thereby covering 2/3rd population of the country. Under the Act, foodgrains are allocated to the States/Union Territories (UTs) @ 5 kg per person per month belonging to priority category and 35 kg per family per month for Antyodya Anna Yojana (AAY) families at very low prices of Rs.1 per kg, Rs.2 per kg and Rs.3 per kg for coarse grains, wheat and rice respectively. The Act also has special focus on nutritional support to women and children upto 14 years of age, pregnant women and lactating mothers who are entitled to meals as per nutritional norms. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are also entitled to receive maternity benefit of not less than Rs.6000. The States/UTs who have not implemented the NFSA so far are being allocated foodgrains under the existing Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) @ 35kg per family per month to the BPL [including AAY] families and @ 15-35kg per family per month to Above Poverty Line (APL) families. Apart from this, the Government has been providing food grains at subsidized prices to the targeted population under various Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) such as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls, Annapurna etc.
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The Government also allocates additional foodgrains at subsidized prices for distribution to the people affected by natural calamities like drought, flood etc. on request of the concerned States/UTs.
To meet the distributional requirement of foodgrains under TPDS/OWS and to maintain operational stock for this purpose in sustained manner for better food management, the Government has revised food stocking norms w.e.f. 22.01.2015.
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